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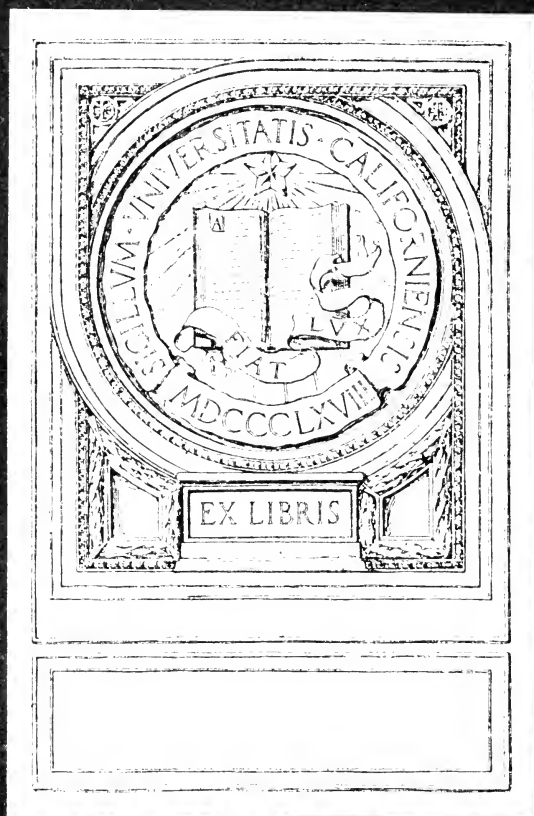
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# THE POWERS OF CONGRESS

The Constitutionality of its Acts on Reconstruction.

ALARMING TENDENCY OF THE SEYMOUR DEMOCRACY.

## S P E E C H

OF

HON. MATT. H. CARPENTER,

AT CHICAGO, ILL., AUGUST 12th, 1868.

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MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: The occurrence of the Presidential campaign calls out the American people to the examination of the principles and the measures which have marked the administration for the preceding term. Another Presidential election is on foot—another gathering of the American people from Maine to California, from the lakes to the Gulf, which may now be seen in the United States, for the same purpose. The precise practical question is whether we will support General Grant or Governor Seymour for President of the United States; cries of "Grant! Grant!" and this question we are to settle, not as men-worshippers or parasites, but by reason and judgment, and as American citizens, conscious of the responsibilities which rest upon us in this great choice. Glorious as Grant is in his past record, if he stood to-day—I do not say with the party, but upon a platform and principles detrimental to the best

interests of the Republic—pledged to overthrow all the results of the war; pledged to encourage and comfort rebellion, or what little rebellion there is left; or, if we could possibly imagine such a transformation, if Governor Seymour stood to-day on a platform which would secure us the fruits of our victory, and which would give to us lasting and permanent tranquillity, then there is no doubt that the American people would, as they have for the last six years, through all the trials and bloodshed of the war, support the principles which are embodied in their hearts, and dear as their life, [great cheers,] although it would probably be equally difficult for them to determine whether they would say that the patriotic Grant had left their ranks, or that the unpatriotic Seymour had left their standard. But, by examining the platform upon which these respective candidates stand, it will be found that each is true to the principles which characterized him

during the war. It will be found that Grant is struggling now to secure the fruits of the victories which he won, and that Seymour is to-day endeavoring, as far as it is still possible to do, to thwart the object which the Government had in suppressing the rebellion—to secure to the rebels, as much as possible, what they have lost by the result of this contest, and is pursuing precisely the same line of policy to-day that he intrigued for during the war.

#### THE DECLARATIONS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM.

The two political parties "have made up," as the lawyers would say, "the issues, and sent them down to the country for trial." One convention in Chicago and the other in New York have not only selected their candidates, their standard-bearers, but they have promulgated their platforms, or their principles. There is no doubt that both parties are seriously in dead earnest in the issues which they have made. We get some little light as to the platform of the Democratic Convention from the speech which was made by Wade Hampton after his return to his constituents. He says that he was on the Committee on Resolutions. He says that he had prepared a set for himself, but found that they couldn't be adopted. He listened to those which had been prepared by others, and the Democrats on that committee came around him and assured him that they were with him, to the utmost of his wishes; that they would do all in their power to give the South back "the Constitution as it was" before the war, and he contented himself with simply moving an amendment to one resolution which declared the governments of the States, which had been reconstructed under the auspices and patronage of Congress, to be unconstitutional, revolutionary, and void. He says this announcement was met with enthusiastic cheers by the committee, and the Democrats pledged themselves to him that they would go to the utmost of their declaration. What is the utmost of that declaration? We hear so much said about what is constitutional and unconstitutional that we are in danger of losing all the significance of that declaration of the Democratic party. If those governments which are now existing in the ten reconstructed States of the South are un-

constitutional and void, and if these Democrats mean to carry that declaration into practical operation, the result is that these governments are to be swept away. Another revolution is to sweep over the South; anarchy and bloodshed, and another four years of wasting and ruin, is to follow as the result of that revolution accomplished in the South. But the Democrats have cloaked this matter under the plausible pretext that these acts of Congress are unconstitutional, and the Republican party, in its convention has espoused and adopted and promised to support the reconstruction policy of Congress. The Democrats have appealed to the reverence our people feel for the sacred instrument, the Constitution, to cloak and cover their design of revolution again in the South, and thus it throws fairly upon us the burden of vindicating the constitutionality of the reconstruction policy of Congress. Now, I am aware how difficult and how uninteresting it is to discuss such a question in a popular audience like this, in the open air, amid the thundering and confusion of a great city like Chicago. I know how easy it is for a public speaker to spend his apportioned thirty minutes or hour in cracking jokes which will create a good feeling in the crowd and react upon the speaker. But the misery of our Republican speakers is that the members of the Republican party all have heads on them. [Laughter and applause. A voice—"Bully! that's so!"] They all think, and read, and reason, [a voice—"That's the difference,"] and they demand of any speaker who is to occupy fifteen minutes of their time that he shall discuss some principle, shall come to some doctrine in the issues of the war.

#### CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE ACTION OF CONGRESS.

The only real issue made by the parties; the only doctrinal difference in the two platforms which arises to anything like first-class importance, is that which relates to the constitutionality of the reconstruction policy of Congress. This little squabble about paying off our debts—this little question of universal suffrage, and a few other things, very important themselves, are questions which relate to the administration of the Government after you have got a government to be administered. But

the great question rises above that—which involves peace and war, which touches the life of the nation, and touches our existence as one people under the Constitution of the United States; and I propose this evening, because I have been requested to do so, and because I think it important in itself, to discuss for a short time, as well as I am able, under all the difficulties of this situation, the question of the constitutionality of these reconstruction laws. I cannot make such an argument funny nor amusing, but I will try to state clearly and distinctly the grounds upon which we defend that legislation. To do this we must inquire into the facts of the case. What is the situation of the things to which Congress was compelled to apply its reconstruction policy? But, to save words, let us take the State of Georgia as illustrating the whole principle, for what is true of one State is of course true of two or three out of all. Georgia was one of the original thirteen States, and entered this Union by adopting a constitution. She had a State government organized in harmony with the Constitution of the United States, under a State constitution which required all her officers to swear to support the Constitution of the United States. That government continued in existence, as we all know, down to 1860 or 1861, when the majority of her people, having determined to throw off their allegiance to the Government of the United States, and levy war, if need be, to make that declaration good, and to make Georgia an independent nation, organized a new State government in Georgia, and that government went into practical operation, and was supported by the people during the entire continuance of the war. Now, if those leaders, after they determined to levy this war, had called a convention and framed a new State government, with new officers, and had levied war upon the old State government of Georgia and supplanted it, and then had entered into the Southern confederacy and levied war upon the United States, there would be no difference of opinion in this assertion that the government which had come to exist by that proceeding in Georgia was no government in the Union of the United States. And yet, in a legal, constitutional sense, the people of Georgia did what was precisely equivalent to this. They called a constitutional convention, and they took the old constitutional State government, changing it in every essential particular which was essential to its existence as a State government. Instead of requiring its officers to swear to support the Constitution of the United States, they require them to swear to overthrow that Constitution. They severed in every particular every cord and bond which bound them as a State or community to the Constitution and Union of the United States. By so

doing they created, in loyal contemplation, a new government, as much as they would in the case which I have supposed of their calling a convention and framing a new government with new officers. The government which they created by taking the old constitution and moulding it to their views, was no government which had been in the Union from the adoption of the Constitution. It was no constitutional government in any sense, but only an organization in deadly antagonism to the Constitution of the United States, and under that constitution the people of Georgia organized and gave their voluntary allegiance to that State government, went into the Southern confederacy and levied war upon the United States.

#### THE SOUTHERN STATE GOVERNMENTS.

Well, after a while, the war came out just as every man who believes God sits on His throne, and prefers truth to falsehood, justice to injustice, liberty to slavery, might have predicted it would come out. It came out with the triumph of all good things over all bad things. [Loud applause.] And our armies swept everything before them, and demolished every citadel and stronghold of treason and rebellion, and they planted our flag in old and time-honored places after sweeping away the rebel armies, and after sweeping the rebel States they swept away everything that was part and parcel of rebellion, every instrumentality, every agency, and every means by which traitors had sought to levy war upon the Government; and these revolutionary State governments were the principal agency for that war. Now, then, what was the consequence? They had had a government in the Union from the organization of the Union down to 1860. They had destroyed that. They had set up in its place a revolutionary, illegal, unconstitutional government, which had been in existence until Grant swept them away. Then they will be without any State government whatever. The old government they had destroyed, and the new government we had destroyed. They were without any government. [Applause.] Now, what was their condition? The soil of Georgia was still a part of the dominion of the United States; the people of Georgia were still citizens of the United States. They had thrown off no part of the duty which they owed to the Union. The Union had lost or forfeited no part of its power over them. They were, still further, so many square miles, and so many American citizens, without a local government. Now, manifestly, the first step after the war ended was for some one to establish a local government there. This brings us to the question—who shall do that? The Democrats say: "The people of the State shall do it." The Democrats say

that the people of Georgia had got their hand in in making governments; they had experimented upon the subject [derisive laughter;] they had a peculiar and special knowledge. [Laughter.] They had demolished the old Union State governments, and they had created a revolutionary government; they had seen that go to the wall; they had built a Southern Confederacy, and over that they flung out its flaunting rag in rivalry with the Star-splangled Banner of America; and they should form this State government for Georgia.

#### THE TWO THEORIES OF SECESSION.

Now, there are two theories, one or the other of which must be true. The Southern theory of the situation is that the edict of secession passed by Georgia, took her out of the Union and out of the limits of our Federal dominions. Upon this theory, when we conquered that State her soil and her people were as subject to the absolute will of the conqueror as would be the soil and people on conquered Mexico or any other foreign power subdued by our army. If this was their condition, then it was not for them to say whether they would have a State government or not; it was not for them to say whether they would ever belong to the Union or not as an independent State. It was for us to say. It was for the conqueror to dictate terms to the conquered—not for the conquered to dictate terms to the conqueror. ["You are right."] Then, upon their theory, Georgia had no more right to establish a State government, to come back into the Union, than the people of Mexico had a right to demand admission into the Union when Scott planted his standard on the halls of the Montezumas. Again, the other theory is—the Northern theory is—the constitutional theory is—that the ordinance of secession was a nullity; that it was no protection to the rebels of the South; and, although we chose, as we had a right to do, to exercise as against them belligerent rights—the rights and power of a sovereign over his rebel citizens—yet they acquired by the ordinance of secession no privilege and no protection. What is the result of that doctrine? The result of that doctrine is that when the war ended they were so many subdued and conquered traitors, taken in the crime, taken with the blood upon their garments. [Sensation.] They have forfeited life, liberty, property, civil government, and everything that belongs to a man. [Great applause; cries of "That's so!" "You have got it!"] Upon this theory, very clearly, the people of Georgia had no right to form a government and say it had a right to come back into the Union. Now, I don't care which theory the Democrats take for the purposes of this argument, because either one cuts their own throat from ear to ear. [Great applause and laughter.]

There is, then, an end to this pretext that Georgia could settle this question. Rebels may say when war shall begin, where it shall begin, how it shall begin, how it shall be managed; but the Government must say how it shall end, [cheers,] and what shall be the condition of the conquered. ["That's the idea." Applause.] It is about time, after hundreds and thousands of lives have been sacrificed—after we have baptized and fertilized that rebel soil with the best blood of the land—it is about time that some man had the courage and the nerve, and the good sense, to stand up and talk the truth upon this subject. [Sensation, applause, and cheers.] It is clear, then, that Georgia could not reconstruct a government without our consent. Now, the only party interested is the Government of the United States. They, as rebel States, could not do it. The General Government must do it.

#### POWER TO RESTORE THE STATE GOVERNMENTS.

And, then, we come to consider the further question: How? By what department, and through what department and agency shall the United States act to the end of establishing these State governments? And this brings us to the only question upon which any of the departments of the Government have ever held different opinions. The Supreme Court of the United States, the President of the United States, the Congress of the United States, have all concurred in saying that the result of the war was to leave Georgia without any civil government, and that the people of Georgia were powerless as a government in the place of the one which they had destroyed. The Supreme Court of the United States decided what necessarily leads to this conclusion, in the prize cases decided in 1862, when they decided that the people of Georgia, without reference to their private conduct, were to be regarded as public enemies, but, although they were to be regarded as public enemies, they were not the less traitors to the Government of the United States.

#### ASSUMPTION BY MR. JOHNSON.

Andrew Johnson had taken up this subject, and treated it with the fullness and the wisdom that is peculiar to himself. He had said, in his proclamation, which he issued immediately after the surrender of Lee and Johnson, that this rebellion had, in its progress, swept away all civil government in the rebel States, and that the Government of the United States owed it as a duty to that section of the country to establish local State governments there, and he, Andrew Johnson, (being the United States,) undertook to do it. And he did it—"in a horn." [Cries of "And he did it with a horn."] Yes, both. I accept the amendment. He did it both



ways. The President of the United States, as such, clearly had no authority over the subject. Our people, when they framed our Government, were jealous of the executive power—that is, the kingly power. Our forefathers were Englishmen. They remembered well the contests that had stained the soil of England with blood in the struggle to wrest rights and principles from the Crown and deposit them for safe use and practical exercise with the Parliament of England, and when they framed our Constitution they determined to limit and circumscribe and bind down this ever-encroaching Executive power within very narrow limits. There is no danger of oppression of the people by Congress. The danger is always of oppression and usurpation coming from that power which is centralized in one man's bosom. There is no danger that Congress, rent asunder as it is, and must ever be, by cliques and factions, will ever consent to oppress the people, because they can never agree among themselves which clique shall be the oppressors. Mr. Fessenden will have his little circle of friends; Judge Trumbull will have his; Judge Howe will have his. And so there are a dozen cliques in the Senate, and the danger is that they won't be able to get together and do some things that ought to be done some time. [Great laughter and applause.] Not so with the President of the United States. That great rash act of his which brought on his impeachment—the removal of the Secretary of War, for no offence except for differing from him in opinion, and differing from him in this particular, that the Secretary of War thought fit to act according to his own convictions, according to the Constitution, and with the party and with the friends who placed him in power—that rash act of the President of the United States was the result of no deliberation with anybody. No Cabinet officer knew anything about it. Neither Seward nor his chum, Randall, ever dreamed that the thing was to be done. It was the result of a consultation between Andrew Johnson and his demijohn alone, [great applause and laughter,] and, when the purpose was formed, it was executed by an order written at his own table at night. No other man had to be got to sign it, no other ambitious clique had to be conciliated. [Applause.] This I have alluded to only to illustrate the fact and the theory that freedom is in no danger of overthrow from a Congress, or a Parliament, or any other multitudinous deliberative body. It is always in danger of encroachment and overthrow from power which is consolidated and may be exercised upon the volition of a single man. So our fathers, when they framed the Constitution, laid upon that office the firmest and the strongest bond. The President of the United States shall be

the Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy; he may grant pardons and reprieves; he may receive ambassadors and other foreign ministers; he may commission officers of the United States when properly appointed, and he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed. These are the powers which are vested in the President, independent of Congress and coöperation with Congress. Now, it is manifest that none of these powers include that of reconstructing a State government, and when Andrew Johnson undertook to do so he committed a usurpation upon the rights of the people, and upon the Constitution of the United States, which would have brought a monarch of England to the block. There was no pretence or color of law in his whole proceedings. He called a constitutional convention to frame governments, declared the qualification of voters, and the qualifications of those who should be elected to the convention. But suppose those voters who were not qualified—suppose those came to the convention who were not entitled to a seat under his proclamation—what was the consequence? He could not punish, for the simple reason that he could not make law. His whole proceedings were unauthorized, and necessarily and consequently void. But as to the power of the President, I need not push a step further or discuss it at length, because the Democrats themselves concede he has no power; and as far as a discussion of this question as a part of our platform is concerned, it is sufficient to rest it there. They admit this point.

#### THE POWERS OF CONGRESS.

The question then recurs, where is the power of the General Government to frame governments in these rebel States? And, in the first place, the general proposition may be laid down, that if the power is in the Government of the United States at all, and is not conferred by express words upon the President, or some other officer of the Government, then it is surely vested in Congress; because the Constitution provides that Congress shall have the power to make all laws necessary and proper to carry into execution the power conferred upon Congress, and all other powers conferred upon the United States, or any department or officer thereof; consequently, if the power of framing these State governments reposes in the General Government, and not in the people of Georgia, and, as it is conceded, every man can settle the question for himself for thirty minutes' reading, that the Constitution does not locate this power in the President, or any other specific officer, or in the courts, then it follows necessarily that this power of the Government is to be exercised through the power of Congress, to make laws to carry that power into execution. But I do not propose to rest here upon this mere general pro-

position, although it is entirely conclusive. There are other provisions of the Constitution, and other distinct grounds upon which this power may be safely rested. The Constitution provides that Congress may admit "new States." Now, what is the meaning of admitting a "new State," and what is a State to be admitted? Half the confusion that the public labor under regarding this subject has arisen from the fact that the word "State" in the Constitution is used with various meanings. Sometimes it is used in a geographical sense, and sometimes in a political sense. For instance, when the Constitution provides that any man who commits a crime shall be tried in the "State" where it was committed, it means a geographical State, called the State of New York, or of Georgia, &c. When it says a "State" may be a party to any suit in the Supreme Court of the United States, it means a "State government," or a corporation, which is created for that purpose. Take, for instance, Illinois. In a geographical sense, Illinois was always in the Union; her soil was always Federal dominion; her people were always citizens of the United States. But the *State* of Illinois, which was admitted into the Union by an act of Congress, means the corporation or State government which was organized by the people for that purpose. Therefore, when the Constitution says that Congress shall provide for the admission of "new States," it means "new State governments."

#### WHAT IS A NEW STATE?

The Democrats say, "This is conceded, but Georgia is not a new State. Georgia was one of the original thirteen, one of the old States, and clearly that provision of the Constitution does not apply to your case." But, my friend, I have already said that to admit a State means to admit a State government, and when the rebels of the South destroyed the State government which had been in the Union, and put in its place a rebel State government which never was in the Union, and when the armies of the United States swept that way and left Georgia without any government whatever, then, when a government shall be organized there, to be admitted again into the Union and to be restored to the Federal rights, that government thus formed is a new government, as much as though the people of Georgia had never had a government whatever. What difference can it make, for instance, with this power of Congress to admit a State government and to frame a government, whether the people who are to be admitted have once had a government which they have destroyed, or whether they never had a government. For instance, we have west of the Rocky mountains so many square miles of territory, and so many citizens of the United States born in the country.

We say, "Those people are our people, that soil is our soil, and they are entitled to our protection." The Government of the United States establishes a Territorial government there and protects them until such time as they come to a proper condition to be admitted as a State, in full communion, into the Union. Now, this power and jurisdiction of Congress to do this thing grows out of this fact, simply—that if our citizens are dwelling in a compact community upon our soil, without local government, (it is of no consequence how that state of things is brought about—whether it is because they moved there and never had a government, or because they have been there and once had a government and destroyed it;) if they are our people, dwelling upon our territory, and have no government, the United States is bound to put a civil government there.

[At this point the grand torchlight procession filed into the square, and the speaker suspended his remarks for a few moments, resuming as follows:]

I have forgotten precisely where I was addressing the world before the rest of mankind came in; but I believe I had got through with saying what I proposed to in reference to the power of Congress to admit new States; and claimed that that covered the entire ground, and gave Congress the constitutional power to reconstruct a State government for Georgia.

#### A REPUBLICAN FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that we admit what the Democrats claim, that Georgia never was out of the Union, and that her territory and people remaining in the Union—as we conceded they always did, because they could not get out—that therefore she is to be regarded as a State of the Union. The Constitution provides that the United States shall guarantee to every State a republican form of government. Now, if Georgia was not a State of the Union she was a State without any government whatever; consequently she had no republican form of State government; and Congress was called upon in its capacity of legislating and executing that power to take the proper steps to put a republican form of State government in Georgia. This guarantee of the Constitution was intended to secure to the Union a republican State government for such State, without reference to the wishes of the people of a particular State. If New York, for instance, to-morrow should call a convention, and change her form of government from a republican to a monarchical government, it would be the duty of Congress to interfere, because the Constitution makes it the duty of the United States to see to it that there is a republican form of government for them in New York; and if he should call a convention to abolish the form of government, and resolve herself back



into her original condition, so much soil, and so many people without any government whatever, Congress, in this case, would be compelled to take particular steps to put a State government there for the State of New York, because the Constitution has imposed this duty upon the General Government; and the Constitution has provided that Congress shall pass all laws necessary to execute all the powers which the Constitution has conferred upon the United States. This has been so frequently decided by the Supreme Court of the United States—so clearly has it been announced by Chief Justice Gardner, especially in the Rhode Island case, as it is called, reported in the 7th of Howard, where he distinctly lays down the doctrine that it is the province of Congress, and Congress alone, to determine whether the form of government is republican. It must also have the power to say whether there is a government there at all, because without so doing it cannot determine whether a particular form of government is republican or not—and that this duty rests upon Congress—and when it acts in the premises its decision is binding upon every part of the Government, and cannot be questioned in court. This doctrine is so clearly and fully decided that there is no necessity of argument beyond referring you to those decisions. In two or three cases they have been before the Supreme Court, and have been settled beyond dispute, and upon these three grounds that I have mentioned; first, that the power is clearly in the Congress of the United States, and is not conferred specifically upon any other department; secondly, the power in Congress to admit new State governments covers this State, and authorizes Congress to organize a government for the purpose of being admitted; and thirdly, the duty which the Constitution imposes upon Congress to take care that at all times there shall be a republican State government for each State—from that ground alone the power is clearly deducible—from these three facts—from these three separate sources we derive the power of Congress to organize State governments for the rebellious States, which were left at the end of the war without form of government whatever. I have proposed this evening to confine myself strictly to the constitutional power of Congress, and shall leave for another occasion, perhaps at Galena, on Friday evening, to discuss the other independent question, of how wisely and how well Congress has exercised that constitutional power. This is a distinct subject—too full to be spoken of here to-night under the circumstances, and at the foot of a speech. I shall leave the subject of reconstruction, then, with this imperfect discussion of the constitutional power of Congress. That is the only issue which the Democratic platform makes on the sub-

ject. They do not question the details of their acts. They struck the death blow to the system by saying that the whole proceedings are unconstitutional, and therefore void. If I have succeeded in convincing you that Congress has the constitutional power, my object has been accomplished, and that was all I intended to do when I came upon the platform.

#### A CONCLUDING WORD TO THE FENIANS.

I have been invited to come here to Chicago and address the Republican Fenian Club of this State. As the campaign is thickening at home, and I shall probably be detained there until November, and it is doubtful whether I shall have the opportunity of coming here again, I shall say a few words to the Fenians. I am not as drunk as Blair was when he said, "Finnegans, I am with you," [laughter,] but I have a few words which I wish to say to you on the subject of Fenians, and upon several of your duties as Fenians to the Government of the United States. Now, it is too late in the day, it is too far advanced in the history of the world, for any man or set of men to hope to accomplish great results, unless they have some theory, some philosophy of the subject which can stand an examination and be countenanced by the world. What is the philosophy of Fenianism? Suppose a Fenian were asked to-night here why Ireland should be free, and why Irishmen should govern Ireland. He could not give any other answer to that question than to say that every nation should be free, and that the freemen of every nation should control its destiny. That is the philosophy of Fenianism, if it has any philosophy. That is the corner-stone of the claim which Ireland makes to-day for an independent government for Ireland. Now, the question is, what can any Irishman do in the United States to further that end, which is so near his heart? and if I were to give him a word of caution to-night, without charging him one cent for the advice, I would tell him not to make a raid upon Canada. The only result of that would be to put Pat in jail, and not free Ireland. There is, nevertheless, much that he may accomplish. He may accomplish it by framing a public sentiment for the world with that great party in the United States to-day which is pledged in all its policy and all its measures to advance and faithfully apply the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence. Such has become the intercourse of the world, by means of the telegraph, that the sentiment of one nation is known and felt in another. The voice of the nation is heard all round the globe. If you can unite here with that party and give it an ascendancy; if you can strengthen its hands; if you can contribute to make the Declaration of Independence a practical fact; then

you have done what a man may do, and all that a man may do, to form the public sentiment of the world; and when the public sentiment of the world is formed then you will see its practical fruits being borne all over the world. If a mean, dirty scallawag comes into a community to live, one or two things always follows; he either has to reform and conform to the condition of things around him, or he has to leave. Now nations are assuming toward each other precisely that relation, and the opinion of one nation upon the others is growing to be precisely what the opinion of one individual is upon another. Join your hands, then, and join your voices with the party in the United States which is pledged to see every man free. There are certain principles to be ruled by if you are to reach any practical results. If you want to have sunlight in Chicago you must consent to have sunlight in Springfield. If you want to be free yourself you must consent that every one shall be free. If you want to see Ireland free you must consent that England shall be free, and Germany free, and France free, and every other nation as free as yourselves are here in the United States. If you would exercise this power, as citizens of the United States, in shaping public sentiment, you

must act practically in the things you can reach; you must make liberty a practical fact all around you; and whether the man is a German or a Frenchman, an Englishman or a Yankee, an Indian or a negro, whatever his rights are before the law, you must respect them. In this way you are doing something for the down-trodden all over the world. You are uniting your voices to the chorus of the nation that will be heard far over the ocean, in every strong hold and in every dungeon of despotism. [Great applause.] That is your privilege—that is your duty, good, honest Fenians! [Loud applause, and cries of "Go on."] It is one thing for you to say you are willing for me to go on, and another for me to have the strength. I am in very much the condition that General Cass was in when he was invited to discuss the Oak Harbor improvements—there is too much noise and confusion. I cannot talk down the whole tumultuous multitude. I cannot answer these rockets. I cannot, in other words, talk down all creation. The multitude is too great for the speaker, and I am completely exhausted, and you will have to excuse me.

The speaker retired amid great applause and cheers.

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